Understanding Allies' Participation in Social Change: A Multiple Perspectives Approach

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Abstract

The introduction to the *EJSP* special issue brings together recent literature on allyship. We present and discuss different definitions of allyship and highlight a multiple perspectives approach to understanding the predictors and consequences of allyship. This approach suggests that engagement in allyship can be driven by egalitarian and non-egalitarian motivations and that the behaviours identified as allyship can have different meanings, causes and consequences depending on whether researchers take into account the allies' perspective or the disadvantaged groups' perspective. We use this approach as an organizing principle to identify themes that emerge in the papers included in this special issue. We start with four papers that consider the perspective of the advantaged group, followed by two papers that consider the perspective of the disadvantaged group. Finally, we introduce two theoretical papers that examine the relations between disadvantaged groups and allies, and we set out directions for future research.

Keywords: advantaged groups, allyship, disadvantaged groups, motivations, multiple perspectives

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On May 26th 2020, a day after the police killing of George Floyd - an unarmed African American man in Minneapolis, United States - people gathered in the streets to protest against police brutality. Protests against racism and police violence in the United States happen regularly, however the movement that arose in response to the killing of George Floyd was unique in many aspects. First, the protests started during the times when mass gatherings were deemed a health hazard due to the outbreak of coronavirus (World Health Organization, 2020); participation in the protests thus likely meant accepting a higher risk of self- (and other) infection. Second, in addition to mobilizing African American and Black communities, the protests gave voice and brought awareness to the inequalities faced by other ethnic minority communities in the United States, such as Native Americans (Linsroth, 2020), Hispanic and Latinx Americans (Medina, 2020), and Asian Americans (Lang, 2020). Third, the protests spread across 60 countries and empowered disadvantaged groups around to world to demand the end of inequality and acknowledgment of the historical roots of oppression. In the United Kingdom alone, there were over 300 anti-racism protests in the first weeks of June attended by a total of 210,000 people (Mohdin, 2020), and similar protests erupted in Belgium (Birnbaum, 2020), France (McAuley, 2020), the Netherlands (Tasevski, 2020), and Germany (Perrigo & Godin, 2020), etc. Thus, in contrast to many local protest against police violence that never gain attention by local newspapers, let alone national media (Tharoor, 2020), these protests transformed into a global movement against racism in a matter of weeks.

One intriguing aspect of these protests is that they mobilized support across racial and ethnic lines. In addition to the presence of other disadvantaged groups, the protests attracted a record number of advantaged group members (Washingtone, 2020). While a large support base and (inter)national popularity are generally desirable outcomes for social movements

(e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001), many questioned whether such diverse communities can work together. For example, advantaged group members often lack awareness and knowledge about systemic and historical roots of oppression (Gopal, 2020). Moreover, some reports suggest that White people had been drawing attention to themselves and engaging in actions that damage the movement's reputation (Parker, 2020), which raised concerns about their true motives and commitment to the movement. Also, the relationships between disadvantaged groups are complex and characterized by a history of solidarity and division (Lang, 2020). Indeed, the protests have brought to light the existence of anti-Black prejudice among Hispanic, Latinx and Asian American communities (Ebrahimji & Lee, 2020; Medina, 2020). Thus, one may wonder whether the presence of various groups, with different goals and motives, may in the end be costly for a movement due to the potential for conflict and misunderstandings.

The growing movement for racial justice in 2020 illustrates the benefits and many challenges social movements face when they involve members of different groups in a struggle for equality. The goal of the EJSP Special issue on "Solidarity in the Spotlight" is to examine these pressing societal issues, by taking a different approach to the phenomenon of allyship and analysing it from the perspective of disadvantaged groups as well as from the perspective of allies, who may belong to advantaged or other disadvantaged groups. The special issue brings together six empirical papers, four of which examine the advantaged groups' perspective on allyship, and two of which examine the disadvantaged groups' perspective on allyship. These six empirical papers employ a variety of methods and designs (e.g., correlational and experimental studies, a longitudinal study, social network analysis), span various contexts of inequality (e.g., racism, sexism, heterosexism), investigate allyship cross-culturally and even include a region with an intractable intergroup conflict. Moreover, it also introduces two theoretical papers that shed light on the problems between

disadvantaged groups and allies, and how they can be overcome. In this editorial, we discuss various unresolved questions, starting with the definition of the key concept, before proposing a new approach to studying allyship and outlining new lines of inquiry.

What is Allyship?

Definitions and Dilemmas

The topic of allyship has received scholarly attention from researchers working on a variety of different phenomena ranging from collective action (e.g., Becker, Ksenofontov, Siem, & Love, 2018; Iyer & Leach, 2008; Iyer, Leach, & Crosby, 2003; Iyer, Leach, & Pedersen, 2004; Subašić, Reynolds, & Turner, 2008; Radke, Hornsey, & Barlow, 2018; Saab, Tausch, Spears, & Cheung, 2015; Van Zomeren, Postmes, Spears, & Bettache, 2011), intergroup emotions (Iyer & Leach, 2008; Lantos, Kende, & Becker, 2020; Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009), prejudice confrontation (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006; Drury & Kaiser, 2014), intergroup contact (e.g., Becker, Wright, Lubensky, & Zhou, 2013; Hässler et al., 2020; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Reimer et al., 2017; Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio, & Pratto 2009), intraminority solidarity (e.g., Cortland et al., 2017; Craig & Richeson, 2012; 2014), intergroup helping (e.g., Nadler, & Halabi, 2006; Van Leeuwen, & Täuber, 2010), and volunteerism (e.g., Kende, Lantos, Belinszky, Csaba, & Lukács, 2017; Thomas & McGarty, 2018). This work has made significant contributions to our understanding of why and how members of different groups come together to act against inequality. At the same time, it has limitations when it comes to providing a clear definition of this concept and a comprehensive framework to study the phenomenon of allyship in our view.

First, the difficulties arise with the overabundance of different terms in the existing literature (often used interchangeably to describe a variety of phenomena), such as allies, allyship, solidarity, political solidarity, and action on behalf of disadvantaged groups (see

also Louis et al., 2019). Further adding to this complexity is the tendency to use allyship to refer to different types of individual and collective behaviours, as well as to motivations to engage in these behaviours. Additionally, the terms allies and allyship are used to describe the behaviours and motivations of individuals who belong to advantaged groups (e.g., White Americans), and often exclude behaviours and/or motivations of allies who belong to other disadvantaged groups (e.g., Hispanic and Latinx Americans), or those who belong to both (e.g., White Americans who identify as LGBTIQ+).

Second, the definition of allyship is dependent upon the perspective taken by the researcher. A commonly used definition in the literature approaches the concept from the perspective of the disadvantaged group. Ashburn-Nardo (2018), as well as Brown and Ostrove (2013), define allies as individuals outside of the disadvantaged group who are informed about and engage in actions which challenge existing systems of inequality, endorse egalitarian values and norms, and provide support to and affirm the experiences of the disadvantaged group. According to this perspective, allyship pertains to two distinct categories of behaviours with very different goals (i.e., challenging inequality vs. responding to the disadvantaged group's needs), as well as to a specific type of motivation that presumably drives individuals' engagement in different behaviours. Louis and colleagues (2019) criticize this definition because its emphasis on 'ideal' allies may obscure the fact that allies sometimes engage in problematic behaviour and may not be solely motivated by egalitarian concerns. Other work also suggests that advantaged group allies sometimes demand gratitude for their actions or take leadership positions within a movement thereby creating conflict with disadvantaged group activists (e.g., Droogendyk, Wright, Lubensky, & Louis, 2016). To address these issues, Louis and colleagues (2019) propose allyship and solidarity as two distinct motivations to engage in actions that benefit another group. Specifically, they argue that allyship reflects an individual concern with benefits afforded to

their group, whereas solidarity reflects the concern for the disadvantaged group developed through a shared group identity (e.g., either a superordinate identity or opinion-based group identity).

We agree with the latter approach to the extent that there are other motivations to engage in allyship. Nevertheless, in our view equating allyship with ingroup serving motivations may create additional confusion. Instead, we propose that allyship should be studied and understood through a multiple perspectives approach, which takes into account the allies' perspective as pointed out by Louis and colleagues, as well as the disadvantaged groups' perspective (Ashburn-Nardo, 2018; Broido, 2000; Brown, 2015; Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Ostrove & Brown, 2018). We discuss these motivations and the multiple perspectives approach in more detail below.

Multiple Motivations to Engage in Allyship

By integrating self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) and the extended social identity model of collective action (Van Zomeren, Kutlaca, & Turner-Zwinkels, 2018), Radke, Kutlaca, Wright, Siem and Becker (2020) proposed four motivational categories to explain why advantaged group members engage in action for disadvantaged groups: outgroup-focused motivation, ingroup-focused motivation, personal motivation and moral motivation. The *outgroup-focused motivation*, refers to the endorsement of norms, beliefs and politicized group identities aimed at fighting for the rights of the disadvantaged group, and the willingness to reject the power hierarchy, prejudicial beliefs and stereotypes about the disadvantaged group. In contrast, the *ingroup-focused motivation* reflects the motivation to improve the status of the disadvantaged group, but only to the extent that it does not negatively affect the status of the advantaged group. It also assumes a stronger attachment to the advantaged group identity and the endorsement rather than the rejection of the status quo, as is the case for the outgroup-focused motivation. Third,

the *personal motivation* refers to advantaged group members who seek to satisfy their personal needs (e.g., improve their personal image or gain respect and economic resources) by engaging in action for the disadvantaged group. Lastly, actions for the disadvantaged group may also be driven by a *moral motivation*. For instance, advantaged group members may reject the status quo and their group's privilege, because it violates their beliefs about right and wrong.

The advantage of this model over previous ones is that by making a clear distinction between behaviours and motivations it allows for the possibility that different motivations may co-exist within an individual. Moreover, it includes both egalitarian and non-egalitarian motivations described in previous work. More specifically, outgroup-focused and moral motivations reflect a genuine interest in improving a disadvantaged group's status. These two motivations fit with Ashburn-Nardo's, as well as Brown's and Ostrove's definition of allyship based on the perspective of the disadvantaged group. At the same time, the model provides the opportunity to examine when allies may engage in action for one or multiple groups and causes (see Radke et al., 2020), because it separates the motivation based on the identification with a politicized group from the motivation driven by absolute moral beliefs that transcend personal or group boundaries. The other two motivations go beyond the concern for disadvantaged groups, and fit with Louis' and colleagues' views of allyship from the advantaged group perspective. In our view, the model by Radke and colleagues offers a more nuanced approach to understanding when the advantaged group may engage in allyship that serves the interest of their group (i.e., an ingroup-focused motivation), or themselves individually (i.e., a personal motivation).

One shortcoming of the model is that it only speaks to the motivations of allies who belong to the advantaged group. However, we believe it may be used as a starting point to theorize about disadvantaged groups' motivation to engage in action for another

disadvantaged group. For instance, research found that priming shared values and similar histories of oppression increased disadvantaged groups' support for policies aimed at improving the status of another disadvantaged group (e.g., Burson & Godfrey, 2018). It is possible that common experiences of stigmatization and injustice (e.g., Shnabel Halabi, & Noor, 2013; Volhardt, 2015) may facilitate the development of moral and outgroup-focused motivations among disadvantaged group allies. At the same time, competition over scarce economic resources, victim status and/or public support (e.g., Burson & Godfrey, 2018; Noor Vollhardt, Mari, & Nadler, 2017) can be perceived as threatening and trigger the need to maintain positive distinctiveness of one's own group (Ball & Branscombe, 2019; Branscombe Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999; Craig & Richeson, 2014). Consequently, the willingness to engage in an action for another disadvantaged group may be constrained by the potential to reap benefits for their own group (e.g., improved status) or themselves personally. Thus, we see many commonalities between the motivations of disadvantaged and advantaged group allies: disadvantaged group allies may be genuinely interested in improving the status of another disadvantaged group, either because they perceive the inequality as violating their moral beliefs or because they identify with the other group's plight. However, they may also engage in allyship out of more selfish concerns, for instance to secure economic rewards for the members of their own group or for themselves personally.

An important difference between disadvantaged and advantaged group's ingroup-focused motivations is that the former should be driven by the need to improve the status of their group rather than to maintain their privileged status. Overall, we believe this model can be easily extended to include the motives of disadvantaged group allies and it puts forward a more nuanced framework that allows researchers to explore to what extent allies' engagement in (in)appropriate actions is due to their motivations.

Advantages of a Multiple Perspectives Approach to Allyship

Importantly, to move forward the research on allyship needs to take into account the perspective of the disadvantaged group and the perspective of allies as well as the groups they belong to. In our view, taking a multiple perspectives approach opens new possibilities to study both the causes and the consequences of allyship for disadvantaged groups and their allies (see also Craig, Badaan, & Brown, 2020; Selvanathan, Lickel, & Dasgupta, 2020, this issue). At the same time it is a more ecologically valid approach, because it avoids artificially reducing allyship to one perspective.

First, a multiple perspectives approach calls for the awareness that the behaviours identified as allyship may have different meaning, causes and consequences depending on the groups involved. Importantly, this approach highlights that disadvantaged groups play an active role in allyship. Previous work has mostly focused on actions and motivations of allies (and then mostly on advantaged group allies, see Radke et al., 2020), and has devoted little attention to studying what motivates disadvantaged groups to engage in actions with allies, as well as to the effects allies' actions have on disadvantaged groups (but see Hasan-Aslih et al., 2020, and Hildebrand, Jusuf, & Monteith, 2020 included in this issue that tackle some of these questions).

The sole focus on allies can lead to narrow conclusions about the consequences of their actions in ways that overestimate their positive impact in challenging the status quo and underestimate their negative impact on disadvantaged groups. For instance, the research on individual actions by allies (e.g., prejudice confrontation), suggests that the confrontations by advantaged group members are more effective in reducing prejudice than the confrontations by disadvantaged group members (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Gulker, Mark, & Monteith, 2013). Consequently, one may be tempted to assume that any confrontation by advantaged group allies benefits disadvantaged groups, and therefore overlook the fact that confrontations motivated by non-egalitarian concerns can have negative effects on

disadvantaged group's well-being (Estevan-Reina et al., in press). Moreover, examining the consequences of allies' behaviours is particularly important when it comes to studying their engagement in collective action (e.g., protests, strikes) that requires contact and collaboration with disadvantaged group activists. Droogendyk and colleagues (2016) warn that allies can make themselves the centre of the attention, which may lead to conflicts with disadvantaged group activists, and ultimately undermine the goals of the movement. However, to the best of our knowledge, no research has examined the interactions between allies and disadvantaged groups they are acting with. In our view, one needs to study in parallel the motives and behaviours of all groups involved to be better able to understand when problems and conflicts arise and how they can be alleviated (e.g., similar calls have been made by Craig et al., 2020; Droogendyk et al., 2016; see also Hildebrand et al., 2020 in this issue).

Second, a multiple perspectives approach highlights the importance of studying concrete behaviours aimed at expressing support, empathy and affirming the experiences of the disadvantaged group. While earlier work examined how allies can help improve the situation of disadvantaged groups by engaging in individual or in collective actions (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003; Van Zomeren et al., 2011), it ignored that disadvantaged groups do not only want allies who act, but also those who are aware of negative effects of social inequality on disadvantaged groups. Brown and Ostrove (2013) found that disadvantaged groups expect allies to act respectfully and show interest in the disadvantaged groups' experiences, and that these behaviours compliment actions aimed at challenging inequality. Similarly, Iyer and Achia (2020) show that disadvantaged groups do not want to engage in movements lead by advantaged groups members, because they believe that advantaged group leaders are less aware of inequalities than disadvantaged group leaders. Indeed, when advantaged group allies fail to affirm that disadvantaged group members have been treated unfairly, they are more likely to undermine their willingness to confront inequality (e.g.,

Becker et al., 2013). Even though researchers working from the disadvantaged groups' perspective argue that allies' expression of support and willingness to listen to disadvantaged groups' needs are important (see Ashburn-Nardo, 2018; Brown & Ostrove, 2013), they have rarely been explored. In our view, more attention needs to be devoted to how often allies engage in supportive behaviours, what might motivate them to do so, and whether they are aware and knowledgeable of the disadvantaged groups' needs. Similarly, more work is needed to understand when disadvantaged groups need and welcome empathy and support from allies, and how those can be best communicated to fit their needs.

Third, this approach also situates allyship within broader political and societal contexts. Social psychological theorizing suggests that social change depends on the success of social movements in attracting broader political support for its cause (Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Subašić et al., 2008). This work assumes that if disadvantaged groups align their cause with broader societal interests they may gain public support, which can help persuade the authorities and powerholders to comply with their demands (Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Subašić et al., 2008). We propose that allyship plays an important role in this process in two ways. First, allies may serve as role models that can mobilize other members of their group and perhaps help win the hearts and minds of the general public (see also Louis, 2009). Second, social movements that have many allies may be more likely to sway the authorities' decision in their favour. There is some empirical evidence that supports the first assumption by showing that advantaged group allies' may inspire other members of their group to join (see Subašić et al., 2018; Kutlaca, Radke, & Becker, unpublished manuscript). But, if advantaged group allies become too dominant in a movement this may negatively affect the mobilization of disadvantaged group members (see Iyer & Achia, 2020; Radke, Becker, & Kutlaca, unpublished manuscript).

In line with our understanding of allyship, we use a multiple perspectives approach as an organizing principle to identify themes that emerge in the papers included in this special issue. We start with four empirical papers investigating the advantaged groups' perspective (Adra, Li, & Baumert, 2020; Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2020; Roblain, Hanioti, Paulis, Van Haute, & Green, 2020; Stefaniak, Mallett, & Wohl, 2020), followed by two papers examining the disadvantaged groups' perspective (Hasan-Aslih et al., 2020; Hildebrand et al., 2020). Lastly, we introduce two theoretical papers that use a multiple perspectives approach (Burson, & Godfrey, 2020; Selvanathan et al., 2020). Finally, we provide some new directions for research which we hope will stimulate researchers and practitioners to join this important line of inquiry.

Advantaged Groups' Perspective on Allyship

The presence of advantaged group members at the 2020 anti-racism protests sparked by George Floyd's death may seem surprising, because advantaged group members are usually more likely to engage in actions that support rather than challenge their privileged status (e.g., Becker, 2020; Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017; Osborne, Jost, Becker, Badaan, & Sibley, 2019). Previous work has identified factors that facilitate the advantaged groups' willingness to support disadvantaged groups: for instance, higher awareness of their privileged position (e.g., Swim & Miller, 1999), lower identification with their ingroup (e.g., Lowery, Unzueta, Knowles, & Goff, 2006), and stronger endorsement of moral convictions about equality (e.g., Van Zomeren et al., 2011). However, motivations for allyship do not only depend on individuals' values and attachment to their own groups, but are also shaped by the perceptions of intergroup relations.

For instance, one possible reason why advantaged groups are not likely to be found at these protests is because they perceive that providing further concessions to disadvantaged groups means that their group will lose out. The perception that intergroup relations is a zero-

sum game, whereby gains for one group imply losses for other groups (e.g., Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998; Ruthig, Kehn, Gamblin, Vanderzanden, & Jones, 2017), as opposed to a positive-sum game (e.g., Deutsch, 2006), decreases advantaged groups' support for actions and policies benefitting disadvantaged groups (e.g., Radke et al., 2018). Two papers in this special issue provide further empirical support for the generalizability of this effect both cross-culturally (Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2020), and across various contexts of social inequality, that is, racism, heterosexism (Stefaniak et al., 2020), and sexism (Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2020). The reason why endorsing zero-sum beliefs represents a barrier to the advantaged group's engagement is because these beliefs are linked to fear about losing their privileged status (Stefaniak et al., 2020), and more hostile attitudes towards the disadvantaged group (Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2020). However, advantaged group members may also perceive intergroup relations as interdependent rather than antagonistic (e.g., Deutsch, 2006), which may motivate them to engage in allyship. Stefaniak and colleagues (2020) demonstrated that positive sum-beliefs are not just a reverse of zero-sum beliefs as previously assumed (e.g., Różycka-Tran, Boski, & Wojciszke, 2015), but they independently and positively predict intentions to engage in actions for disadvantaged groups.

Moreover, the work on intergroup relations has found that attitudes towards outgroups are shaped by our beliefs about how others perceive us, namely, meta-beliefs (e.g., Otten, 2002; Vorauer, Hunter, Main, & Roy, 2000). Holding positive meta-beliefs, or expecting that others see us in a positive light, has a beneficial effect on our relationship with members of different groups (e.g., Tropp & Bianchi, 2006). The paper by Adra and colleagues (2020) is the first to highlight the impact of three distinct meta-beliefs on the advantaged groups' engagement in allyship. The authors find that White Americans' expectations about whether Black Americans see them as allies (i.e., ally-meta beliefs), as inactive, and responsible for Black Americans' suffering (i.e., inactive and responsible meta-beliefs respectively)

predicted their intentions to act for Black Americans. The existence and impact of meta-beliefs highlights that some advantaged group members care about how they are perceived by disadvantaged groups, which can be used to increase their motivation to challenge inequality.

In our view, however, beliefs and perceptions alone cannot explain when and why advantaged group members engage in action, because allyship is part of social change processes that are determined by the broader social and political context (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001). For example, countries around the world vary greatly in terms of the laws and practices introduced to curb discrimination and provide more rights to disadvantaged groups. Importantly, while in countries with more progressive laws and a more egalitarian normative climate, advantaged group members are more likely to hold positive attitudes towards disadvantaged groups (e.g., Kuntz, Davidov, Schwartz, & Schmidt, 2015), it is not yet known whether this translates to more or less engagement in actions to support disadvantage group members. Interestingly, the paper by Kosakowska-Berezecka and colleagues (2020) finds that in countries scoring higher on the gender equality index, men's intentions to engage in actions for gender equality were lower than in countries scoring lower on this index. It is plausible that less action is needed in countries where gender equality has been achieved at least at the institutional level. However, recent movements like the #MeToo and George Floyd protests, which exposed inequalities in more egalitarian countries, suggest that the advantaged groups' involvement is still warranted.

In addition to the broader normative climate, individuals' actions are also determined by local group norms (e.g., Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990), that is by what other group members approve of (i.e., injunctive norms), and what they do (i.e., descriptive norms). Using a social network analysis approach, Roblain and colleagues (2020) explored the role of injunctive norms in motivating allyship and demonstrated that individuals' perceptions of whether their close peers approve of helping refugees motivate engagement in actions for

refugees. Additionally, their findings suggest that peer norms can be used in two ways: to encourage already mobilized volunteers to continue their work and to promote helping among non-mobilized members of host societies. Thus, this paper provides support for the assumption that allies can serve as role models and inspire others to follow their path.

Altogether, these papers illuminate new pathways for advantaged groups' potential involvement in allyship: perceptions of intergroup relations as interdependent and not antagonistic (Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2020; Stefaniak et al., 2020), meta-beliefs or expectations to be perceived as allies by disadvantaged groups (Adra et al., 2020), and egalitarian peer group norms (Roblain et al., 2020). They also deepen our knowledge about potential barriers to allyship, which seem to be particularly strong among highly identified advantaged group members. According to this research, the reason why high identifiers are not willing to challenge inequality (e.g., Iyer & Ryan, 2009; Osborne et al., 2019), is because they are more likely to perceive intergroup relations as antagonistic and endorse zero-sum beliefs (Stefaniak et al., 2020), and feel that their group has been unfairly portrayed (Adra et al., 2020). Furthermore, two papers in this issue highlight that allyship does not happen in a vacuum and reveal an interesting interplay between the broader normative climate that may not necessarily boost advantaged groups' engagement in allyship (Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2020), in contrast to a local peer norms that can exert a positive influence (Roblain et al., 2020). We believe these findings provide some answers to the puzzling question of why White Americans have joined recent protests in larger numbers. The protests coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic, which had already taken many lives especially among disadvantaged groups in the United States (Pilkington, 2020). Perhaps the combination of the government's response to the pandemic and the cruelty of George Floyd's death was needed to open advantaged groups' eyes to the problems in the system. Thus, dissatisfaction with the current

broader normative climate helped White Americans realize that they need to engage in actions, because those in power were failing to do so.

Disadvantaged Group Perspective on Allyship

One possible reason why previous work has paid less attention to the impact of allyship on disadvantaged groups is because it assumed that allies can facilitate the success of a political movement (e.g., Drury & Kaiser, 2014; Simon & Klandermans, 2001). Whilst advantaged group allies seem to be effective in reducing discriminatory behaviours among perpetrators (e.g., Czopp & Monteith, 2003) or motivating others to act (see Roblain et al., 2020 this issue; Subašić et al., 2018), research on intergroup contact and collective action highlights the costs associated with their involvement from the perspective of the disadvantaged group. For instance, allies may put more emphasis on achieving harmonious intergroup relations, which can decrease disadvantaged group members' participation in collective action (Dixon et al., 2015; Hasan-Aslih, Pliskin, van Zomeren, Halperin, & Saguy, 2019), by reducing their anger and sense of efficacy, which are the classic predictors of collective action (Ufkes, Calcagno, Glasford, & Dovidio, 2016). The key goal of allyship is to assist disadvantaged groups in achieving their goals, thus it is crucial to understand how disadvantaged groups respond to allies' presence and involvement.

Two papers in this special issue bring to light disadvantaged groups' views on allyship by examining the impact allies' actions have on disadvantaged group members and the motivations of disadvantaged groups to engage in actions together with advantaged group members. First, Hildebrand and colleagues (2020) question whether having a strong ally who confronts discrimination is enough to make disadvantaged group members feel safe. One sobering insight from their work is that the detrimental effects of discrimination on disadvantaged groups' wellbeing cannot fully be erased through confrontation. Moreover, the impact of a lone confronter, irrespective of their identity (advantaged group ally,

disadvantaged group ally, or an ingroup member) is minimal. Only when the confrontation is affirmed by bystanders it can, though only partially, alleviate the psychological damage discrimination has on disadvantaged group members' wellbeing and feelings of safety. Second, the paper by Hasan-Aslih and colleagues (2020) sheds light on when and why disadvantaged groups may be willing to act with advantaged group allies in the context of an intractable conflict. The authors find that during periods of relative peace, disadvantaged group members are willing to join forces with allies, but their motivation to do so decreases during periods of conflict. Interestingly, their findings suggest that the biggest change occurs among highly identified disadvantaged group members: during peaceful periods high identifiers were more motivated to engage in actions with allies, but were also more likely to pull away from collaboration as the conflict intensified.

Together these two papers highlight the problems with reducing allyship to only one perspective and assuming that disadvantaged groups need and want allies. Importantly, they warn against the tendency to overlook the devastating impact injustice and inequality have on disadvantaged groups. The research needs to move from seeing allies (and especially those from advantaged groups) as saviours and acknowledge their positive and negative effects. Hasan-Aslih and colleagues further point out that acting together with allies presents a dilemma for disadvantaged groups (e.g., Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio, Pratto, & Singh, 2011), because they need to choose between seeing the advantaged group as oppressors or as collaborators in the fight for justice.

Theoretical Models of Majority-Minority and Intraminority Relations

Empirical progress on allyship cannot be done without models that integrate contradictory findings and highlight unanswered questions. A unique feature of this special issue is the inclusion of two theoretical papers that take a multiple perspectives approach to examining the relationship between disadvantaged groups and advantaged group allies

(Selvanathan et al., 2020), and the factors that facilitate collaboration between members of disadvantaged groups (Burson & Godfrey, 2020). We shortly describe both papers and use their insights to reflect on challenges and questions for future research.

Other theoretical work has pointed out that advantaged group activists may undermine the movement and create conflicts by seeking a leadership position and insisting on their voices being heard, instead of providing support and seeking guidance from disadvantaged group activists (Droogendyk et al., 2016). Using the needs-based model of reconciliation (Shnabel, Nadler, Ullrich, Dovidio, & Carmi, 2009), Selvanathan and colleagues (2020) suggest that the answer to these questions lies in the different psychological needs disadvantaged and advantaged group activists seek to satisfy. Specifically, they assume that disadvantaged group activists have a heightened need for respect and empowerment, whereas advantaged group allies have a heightened need for moral affirmation and acceptance. Problems arise when the need for moral acceptance leads allies to insist on common goals and provide unwanted help instead of letting disadvantaged groups lead the movement and establish their own identities. Moreover, the model assumes that when allies are mindful and responsive to disadvantaged groups' needs and seek to empower them, their actions may be welcomed and needed.

The paper by Burson and Godfrey (2020) is the sole article in this special issue that focuses on minority relations. Disadvantaged groups often share a common oppressor (e.g., Black and Latinx communities are both treated poorly by police and law enforcement in U.S.), which suggests that they can be 'better' allies than advantaged group members who do not share these experiences. However, this is not necessarily the case because competition over limited resources, public attention and support (e.g., Burson & Godfrey, 2018; Noor et al., 2017) may also create conflicts between disadvantaged groups. Burson and Godfrey incorporate factors that may hinder and promote intraminority solidarity into a model based

on the theory of critical consciousness, originally developed in pedagogical sciences (e.g., Diemer & Blustein, 2006; Gutierrez, 1995). This theoretical framework identifies similar structural factors that oppress various disadvantaged groups, while recognising different histories of oppression (e.g., Asian, Latinx and Black communities have their own unique experiences and histories of injustice). The authors assume that linking structural and historical roots of inequality has the potential to reduce intraminority competition, increase similarity and facilitate the creation of shared identities.

By analysing the concept of allyship in a more holistic manner, these two papers critically reflect on the essential characteristics of allyship as a social-psychological phenomenon. The key message put forward by both papers is that allyship revolves around collaboration between members of different groups who have their own collective (and individual) experiences, and needs they want to satisfy. Thus, conflicts and misunderstandings are an integral part of allyship irrespective of whether allies belong to advantaged or disadvantaged groups. In our view the two models complement one another: the reason why allies may fail to meet disadvantaged groups' needs may be due to different structural and/or historical factors that shape their experiences with inequality. For example, using the insights from Selvanathan's and colleagues' model, disadvantaged groups may be better allies to each other, because they share the need for respect and empowerment. However this does not necessarily mean they know how to satisfy them better. As Burson's and Godfrey's model suggest, disadvantaged groups have different histories of oppression and may have developed different ways to deal with injustice, which do not align with other disadvantaged groups (e.g., some disadvantaged groups may seek more expressions of empathy, others anger etc.). In any event, we believe that future theoretical and empirical work would benefit from paying more attention to the impact of collective (and disparate)

needs, histories and structural factors on the relationship between allies and groups they act for.

Implications for Future Research on Allyship

The papers included in this special issue begin to provide the answers to some of the questions we outlined in our multiple perspectives approach to allyship. In this section, we consider additional questions for future research on allyship by taking into account how these questions can be approached from the perspective of allies and disadvantaged groups.

In our view, future work should pay more attention to the type of behaviors allies are willing to engage for disadvantaged groups. The research differentiates between normative actions that reflect commonly accepted forms of collective action like protests and demonstrations, and non-normative actions (e.g., riots) that violate societal norms and may sometimes involve violence against public property or other people (Tausch, et al., 2011). Violent and non-normative actions by disadvantaged groups are disliked by the general public and especially by members of advantaged group (Feinberg, Willer, & Kovacheff, 2020; Teixeira, Spears, & Yzerbyt, 2020). But little is known about whether the presence and involvement of allies in non-normative actions positively or negatively influences public perceptions and whether disadvantaged group members approve of allies who engage in such behaviours. While allies who participate in rioting are not likely to receive approval from anyone, allies who form human chains to block the police, engage in hunger strikes to promote awareness of inequality or save people from drowning in the sea may evoke opposing reactions. On the one hand, these actions violate laws and norms and may be viewed negatively by authorities and advantaged groups, as in the case of the German captain who rescued migrants from drowning in the sea and was facing a trial for defying Italian laws (Tondo, 2019). On the other hand, these actions can also be seen as examples of morally courageous behaviours (Baumert, Halmburger, & Schmitt, 2013), and the individuals who

engage in them could be perceived to be moral exemplars (e.g., Schnall & Roper, 2012). Future research could examine disadvantaged groups' and the general public views of these actions, as well as how perceived risks and the characteristics of the broader context (e.g., salience of intergroup conflict, more or less egalitarian societal climate), influence allies' motivations to engage in these behaviours.

Furthermore, we argued that research needs to look closely at the interactions between allies and disadvantaged groups. For example, it would be interesting to study the different behavior allies and disadvantaged group activists show at real-life protests. Is there a spatial segregation observable between disadvantaged groups and allies? Who is chanting, who is clapping, who is leading the demonstration? It is possible that having advantaged group allies at the forefront of the protest may create friction with disadvantaged group activists (e.g., Iyer & Achia, 2020), but the presence of advantaged group allies can also help ensure that law enforcement officials react in a more measured (and less violent) way to the action (see Kahn Goff, Lee, & Motamed, 2016).

However, in some contexts the distinction between disadvantaged groups and allies loses its importance. For instance, when we think about collective identities and movements based on shared opinions (opinion-based groups) such as anti-war and environmental movement, it is obvious that people with different ethnicities, socio-economic status and gender participate in these movements (McGarty, Bliuc, Thomas, & Bongiorno 2009). However, the groups created around shared opinions deal with topics for which some members are more likely to be affected than others. For instance, wars and climate change are more likely to affect people with lower socio-economic status. Thus, even though all members of opinion-based groups may identify with the goal of the movement, the differences in experiences may create conflicts and negatively impact the interactions between members of various subgroups within these movements.

Importantly, we believe that more attention needs to be devoted to disadvantaged groups' needs, views and beliefs around allyship. With the exception of the paper by Hasan-Aslih and colleagues, little is known about disadvantaged groups' motivations to engage in actions with allies. For instance, the model by Selvanathan and colleagues suggests that disadvantaged group activists may engage or refrain from actions with allies depending on whether their needs for respect and empowerment are met. It is possible that disadvantaged groups' motivations depend on their beliefs about how allies perceive them. Drawing from the work by Adra and colleagues (2020) on the importance of meta-beliefs, we suspect that disadvantaged groups may care about whether allies see them as movement leaders, or as helpless and weak, which may (de) motivate them from joining forces with allies.

Future research could also apply the multiple perspectives approach to understanding the role of multiple identities in motivating allyship. As previously discussed, much of the psychological literature has either examined allyship from the perspective of the advantaged groups or has focused on disadvantaged groups' experiences. But we know that this is not a true reflection of the social world; we all identify with multiple groups (some which shift and change over time). It is important to consider when and how multiple identities are made salient by a given context, are activated, intersect, prompt action, and lead to differing outcomes. Further to this point, the unique and complex histories of disadvantaged groups (but also how they intersect) should be taken into account given that they inform issues considered to be relevant, and approaches taken, when engaging in collective action today. The theoretical papers included in this special issue (Burson & Godfrey, 2020; Selvanathan et al., 2020), as well as recent work on intraminority solidarity (Ball & Branscombe, 2019; Cortland et al., 2017; Craig & Richeson, 2012; 2014), provides a starting point for investigating these questions.

Lastly, we note that further theoretical and empirical progress on this topic requires methodological changes, for example the inclusion of activist samples and the use of longitudinal designs. A multiple perspectives approach also implies that research should devote more attention to studying interactions and conflicts between activists, which can be accomplished in field studies using observational and qualitative methods. The majority of empirical work in this special issues is done with non-politicized samples (except for Roblain et al., 2020), making it harder to generalize and estimate the impact of the identified factors on the motivations and the perceptions of people who engage in actions against inequality. Prior work suggests that there are both qualitative and quantitative differences among politicized and unpoliticized individuals (see Kutlaca, van Zomeren, & Epstude, 2020; Turner-Zwinkels, van Zomeren, & Postmes, 2017). To illustrate, politically active individuals are more likely to moralize the issues they act for than individuals who are not actively engaged. Future research would benefit from directly comparing advantaged group members who may be potential allies, but have not yet engaged in allyship and those who have. Moreover, a longitudinal design would allow for better investigation of when and how advantaged group members sympathetic to disadvantaged groups' plight come to engage in actions, and which individual and situational factors contribute to their transformation from passive sympathizers to politically active allies. We do not want to underestimate the difficulties associated with taking into account different group's needs and experiences, and translating them into research and practice. However, we hope that this special issue has illustrated the importance and the necessity to take multiple perspectives into account in order to better understand and facilitate social change.

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